

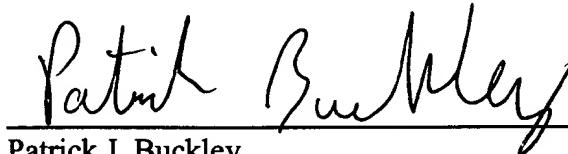
**R E M A R K S**

Upon entry of this Preliminary Amendment, claims 1-16 and 24-40 will be canceled, claims 17-22 will be amended, and claims 41-55 will be added. Thus, claims 17-23 and 41-55 will be pending. No new matter has been added, and Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the originally filed claims in this application and in other applications.

This Preliminary Amendment is being filed along with a Petition to Make Special, a Fourth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, and a letter requesting a pre-first Office interview pursuant to the Pilot Program set forth in OG Notices: 27 April 2004.

Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of the present application, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned via telephone at (203) 972-0191.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Patrick J. Buckley  
Registration No. 40,928  
Buckley, Maschoff & Talwalkar LLC  
Five Elm Street  
New Canaan, CT 06840  
(203) 972-0191

October 20, 2004

Date